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OPERATIONS CENTER

IRAN WORKING GROUP

Sitrep No. 295

DDCI
D/NFAC
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D/OCO
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NIO/I&W
C/NESA

DDSET
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XEXEC.SEC.

Situation in Iran as of 0530 EST, April 25, 1980

(C) White House Announcement on Rescue Operation

At 0115 EST the White House released the following announcement:

The President has ordered the cancellation of an operation in Iran which was underway to prepare for a rescue of our hostages. The mission was terminated because of equipment failure. During the subsequent withdrawal of American personnel there was a collision between our aircraft on the ground at a remote desert location in Iran. There were no military hostilities, but the President deeply regrets that eight American crew members of the two aircraft were killed and others were injured in the accident. Americans involved in the operation have now been airlifted from Iran and those who were injured are being given medical treatment and are expected to recover.

This mission was not motivated by hostility toward Iran or the Iranian people and there were no Iranian casualties.

Preparations for this rescue mission were ordered for humanitarian reasons, to protect the national interests of this country, and to alleviate international tensions. The President accepts full responsibility for the decision to attempt the rescue.

The nation is deeply grateful to the brave men who were preparing to rescue the hostages.

The United States continues to hold the Government of Iran responsible for the safety of the American hostages.

The United States remains determined to obtain their safe release at the earliest possible date.

The President will address the nation this morning at 0700 EST. Families of the hostages have been notified and Congressional leaders were also briefed. At this time, we have no evidence of any reprisals against the hostages.

(C) Reaction From Iran

There has been no major reaction from Tehran to the news of the rescue operation. As of 0400 EST, Tehran radio had not yet

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carried any reports in its local broadcasts. According to AFP, Iranian leaders have ordered an immediate investigation into the incident. Army Commander-in-Chief Shadmeh said he had no indication of exactly where the aircraft collided. Shadmeh said a statement would be issued later in the day.

The militants at the compound said they would release a communique if the news were confirmed. This communique would specify what action the militants would take, a spokesman indicated. As of 0430 EST, the militants had not yet made any statement. President Bani-Sadr has left for Ahwaz where he is scheduled to give a speech later in the day. Defense Minister Chamran addressed students at Tehran University today and did not make any specific reference to the rescue attempt.

(U) Foreign Reaction

The first bulletin from Tass carried the White House announcement in a factual manner without comment. Syrian State Radio has called the reported attempt an "overt act of aggression." Israeli radio reports that the rescue mission was launched in Egypt and stopped over in Bahrain. No sources were specified for this report.

(U) Late Item: Iran Reaction

Tehran Radio at 0434 EST reports the abortive attempt to rescue the hostages at the U.S. Embassy without comment. Pars News Agency is carrying an unconfirmed report that the wreckage of an aircraft has been spotted near Tabas in eastern Khorasan Province.

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